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September 15, 1986

Semaphore Announces Telefolders

A few Semaphore employees recently interviewed themselves in order to produce the following article.

Q: What is Semaphore's Telefolders, and why is it of interest to Macintosh users?

A: Telefolders is both a product and a service, designed by Mac users exclusively for Mac users. The product half is a telecommunications program that runs on a Macintosh, allowing it to communicate by phone with a public data base and private electronic mail system running on Semaphore's multi-user time-sharing computer. That's the service half.

Q: What's so special about that? Don't CompuServe, GEnie, and a lot of other information systems already offer those capabilities?

A: Those systems are text-based. They're designed to be accessed by all types of users with all kinds of terminals and computers. They require users to type a lot of commands and wade through a lot of text menus and listings, which is always confusing and hard to learn. What's special about Telefolders is that it's icon-based. It assumes, in fact *requires*, that the user has a Macintosh. Telefolders displays information as windows and icons. Instead of typing, you click with the mouse. It's much easier to understand and use.

Q: What exactly does a Macintosh do when it's connected to Telefolders?

A: Your Mac will look very much like it's using Apple's Finder. The centerfold in this issue has a

number of examples of typical screen displays during a Telefolders session. The various files in Telefolders' data base are represented by icons, just like the files on your Mac's disk, except that the files are in Semaphore's computer. The icons are grouped into folders, which can be opened as windows. Browsing through Telefolders should be very familiar to anyone who has already used a Macintosh.

Q: What is Telefolders designed to do for users?

A: Telefolders is designed to provide a number of things. First of all, it's designed to provide a large public data base of Macintosh programs and documentation, especially public domain software. Telefolders is designed to be very easy to use, requiring essentially no learning effort. We expect users to be productive from the first moment they call in. And Telefolders is a give and take system. It's very easy to send programs or documents from your Mac to Telefolders, including private mail, and it's very easy to receive and copy items from Telefolders to your Mac.

Q: How can anyone find anything if all that information is constantly flying in and out of the system?

A: Telefolders keeps things organized as folders within folders, which is the typical way to organize files on a Mac, and what gave Telefolders its name. At the start of a Telefolders session, the initial window contains a dozen folders for the main categories of information in Telefolders: applications software, entertainment software, fonts, MacPaintings, and so on. Opening one of those folders typically leads to more folders. For example, the "entertainment" folder opens to show a folder for games, a folder for music, and a folder for

demonstrations. The "tools" folder opens to show a folder for programmer tools and a folder for user tools. Eventually, the nested folders lead to icons representing real information, such as a program or document. The higher level folders are locked to prevent any changes and to retain the orderly organization of the folders. The lower level folders aren't locked, so users can add more icons at will.

Q: What are some of the more popular folders?

A: The system grows and changes, reflecting the interests and activities of the users, but some of the more active folders besides those already mentioned are the "help" folders, where users can leave questions and descriptions of problems they're having with computing, folders for information about new products, folders that serve as forums for popular topics such as upgrades, folders of items for sale, and the special private mail folders.

Q: Is all interaction between users handled only by messages, or is there direct online communication too?

A: Right now, you can only contact other users by sending and receiving icons, but we're planning "chat" capabilities that will be on par with the competing services.

Q: What was that about private mail?

A: Besides being able to access all those public folders, every user also has a private folder for their eyes only. It can contain personal icons the user chooses to save there, along with any icons sent specifically to them by other users, if the recipient gave the sender permission to leave mail.

Q: What are the steps to actually use Telefolders?

A: The Telefolders software for the Mac comes on a disk like any other Macintosh application. Insert the disk into your Mac, double-click on the Telefolders program, and the program starts by asking you for Telefolders' phone number, your Telefolders account name, and your password. Enter the information and click on a "Dial" button on the display, and Telefolders makes the modem dial the phone, and then automatically logs on to Semaphore's host computer under your account name. From then on, your Mac displays the Telefolders data base as clickable windows and icons, along with a single pull-down menu for a few additional commands, such as "Quit" for when you're ready to end the session and hang up.

Q: What about word size and parity bits and all those other telecommunications things?

A: You don't need to worry about all that. That's one of the advantages of Telefolders. The host computer knows exactly what kind of computer and software is calling up, so each side has already been designed to use the same communication protocol by convention. Everything is preadjusted. Your modem must be capable of 1200 baud, however.

Q: All this is probably free, right?

A: We charge 15¢ per minute for a toll call to Telefolders, day or night. Or, you can make toll-free calls to Telefolders using our 800 numbers. During non-prime-time hours, the toll-free rate is 30¢ per minute. For prime time hours, the rate is 54¢ per minute if you call toll-free from out of state or 74¢ toll-free within California. Prime time is 8AM to 5PM Monday through Friday for out of state calls, and 9AM to 9PM Monday through Friday for California calls.

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Q: What about minimum charges and other miscellaneous costs?

A: Unlike other services, there are no registration charges, no monthly charges, and no minimum charges in Telefolders. Disk storage charges for icons in your private folder are 25¢ per 500 characters per day, but are only totaled each midnight. If you clear out your private folder before midnight each day, you never pay for the private disk space you use. Of course, icons that you send to public folders generate no disk charges whatsoever. In fact, the time for

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completed uploads to public folders is also free, except during prime time toll-free calls.

Q: How can I get a Telefolders account?

A: The easiest way is to use the coupon in this issue's centerfold. We're offering a \$49.95 starter kit that includes Telefolders software for the Macintosh, an instruction poster, and an account for \$45 of access usable at any time. \$45 equals 5 hours of toll-call access any time, or 2.5 hours toll-free access during non-prime-time hours. You choose your own account name and password when you send your order.

Q: What's the history behind Telefolders?

A: We got the idea for Telefolders back in August 1984, after our first visit to a Mac user group, where we discovered how much public domain software was being generated. We thought it would be nice to have a central clearinghouse for all that kind of information, a kind of library, but only if it was as easy to use as the Mac itself. Ever since then, we've been toying with various designs for the system, but for over a year and a half it was just an informal back-burner project with no real schedule. Then earlier this year we began working on Telefolders in earnest. We started out hoping that existing versions of the Finder would be able to support remote systems like Telefolders over modems, but that didn't work out.

Q: Using existing Finders didn't work out?

A: No. Even though the Macintosh specifications include guidelines for "external file systems", that is, ways to make Macintosh programs work with files that don't happen to be stored on Mac disks, we couldn't get anyone at Apple interested in talking to us about making their own Finder follow those specs. That was unfortunate because, when you think about it, a general purpose Finder should be able to open an icon for a modem port and see the folders and icons for files on a remote computer, just like opening a disk icon and seeing the icons for local disk files. All indications are that Apple will offer that kind of capability in the future, but it looks like Telefolders is the only system doing it for now. However, we are interested in talking to anyone wishing to establish standard ways of connecting remote computers to Macs, using icon-based interfaces.

Q: What happened after you realized you couldn't use the Finder?

A: We started writing our own software for the Mac side. The first

working, usable versions of Telefolders were running in early June. Many, many versions have come and gone since then, and we expect to continue reworking and enhancing Telefolders indefinitely. Users can easily stay up-to-date by downloading the current version of Telefolders software posted in Telefolders itself.

Q: Telefolders has been available since June?

A: Not publicly. All of our users to date have been by invitation only, although word about the system has been getting out because some of our free-lance writers have found out about it, and because of our efforts at collecting public domain software to seed the data base. Last month we started gearing up as a full-fledged commercial service. This is the first real month of public announcements and invitations to everyone.

Q: What are some of those future enhancements you mentioned?

A: Besides real time chatting, which we already discussed, there seems to be a demand for automatic, unattended operation. In fact, a lot of that has already been coded into the system, although it's currently hidden beyond the edges of the initial dialing window when you first start Telefolders. There's a third "Dial" button that can automatically dial at a future date and time, download selected items, and log off, all without user intervention. That'll be convenient for automatic late night downloads, when rates are cheaper. We're also expecting a few Mac developers to offer their own versions of software for accessing Telefolders, with their own ideas of improvements and enhancements. Just as there are many telecommunications packages for accessing text-based services with a Macintosh, we look forward to seeing more suppliers of icon-based software for calling up Telefolders. We just hope they retain at least some of the ideas we've developed, like the Icon information window.

Q: What's the Icon information window?

A: It's a convenient way to find out what you're looking at as you're browsing through a lot of new icons. Imagine if you've just received a Mac disk full of public domain software, and you want to find out what's on it. You have to open a lot of separate Get Info windows to see each icon's description. Our approach is to instead use a separate desktop icon called Icon information. If Icon information is opened as a window, then it automatically displays the description of any other icon or window you click on. It makes

browsing very easy, and it's a feature that should be in all Finders.

Q: Doesn't it require a lot of time to transmit all those pictures of windows and icons from the host to the Macintosh?

A: No, because we don't send pictures. The Telefolders host computer knows it's talking to a Macintosh, so it can depend on the power and software built into the Mac to do most of the work. For example, if the host computer wants to display a folder in the corner of a window on the Mac screen, it just sends numbers for the window size and co-ordinates of the folder, and a short command to tell the Mac to display a folder in the window at that position. The Mac already knows how to draw folders and windows, so it doesn't have to ask the host computer for a pixel-by-pixel description of what to draw. As a result, actual transmissions tend to be much shorter than you would think. Plus, we use a portion of the Mac's memory as a cache. As much information as possible about all

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the windows and icons is kept in memory, even if not currently displayed, so that if a window is re-opened, the Mac already knows what to display, and doesn't have to ask the host to retransmit icon descriptions. And remember, pictures are worth a thousand words. We've found that sessions with Telefolders can actually require much less data to be transmitted over the phone than equivalent sessions on text-based systems. You don't have to wade through all those text-based multiple choice menus, and you certainly do much less typing.

Q: Do you think the Telefolders approach will be a success?

A: We've heard figures that only one out of ten Mac owners has a modem, and we can understand why. Existing electronic information systems are confusing and hard to learn, and expensive to use. We certainly want to change all that, and see more Mac owners using a modem. In fact, maybe we should be offering modems right along with Telefolders accounts for first-time users new to telecommunications. That might not be a bad idea.

Q: Thanks for agreeing to do this interview.

A: No problem — our time is your time. (With apologies to Jon Bentley.)

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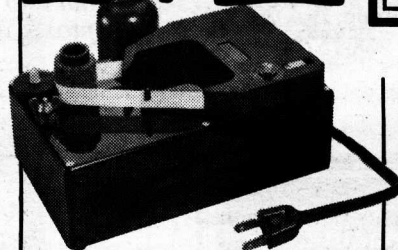
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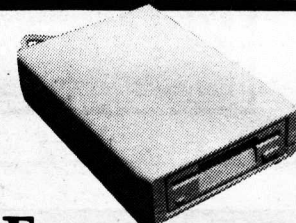
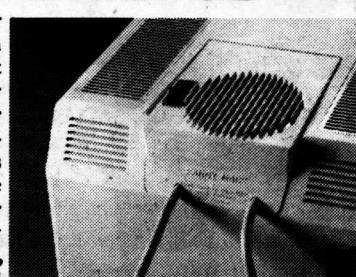


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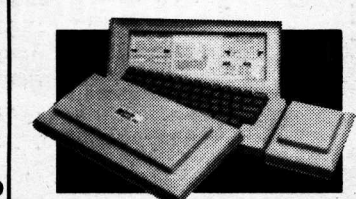
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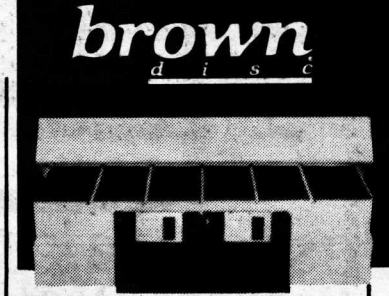
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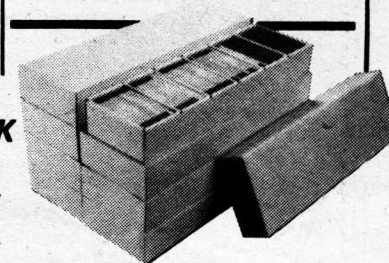
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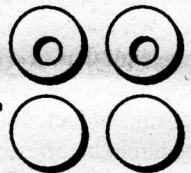
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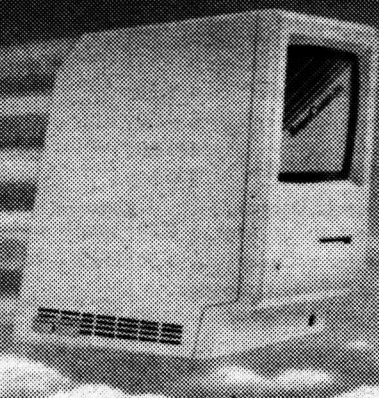
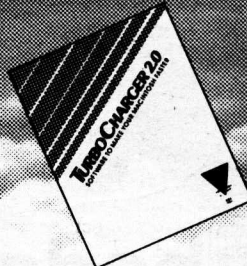
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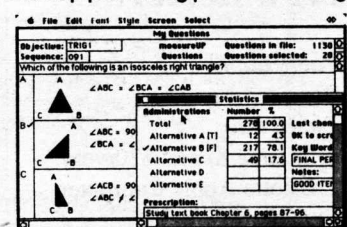
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Subscriber Interests And Activities

Kathleen Gresham, Houston, TX: I began researching desktop publishing and the Macintosh last November. I bought a Mac Plus and a Laserwriter for our company in February and March and now the whole marketing department wants in on the fun. We are looking to

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put in a Mac network integrating a couple of IBM PCs and with connections to our VAX and Tandem mainframes.

Terence Harpold, Philadelphia, PA: I own a 512K Mac, upgraded twice, first from 128K, then with the 800K drive and 128K ROM. With the new internal drive, I really notice the noise (whrr!) and slowness of my old 400K external drive. I'm saving my pennies to buy a new external drive. I'm going to wait for the moment on further hardware upgrades, as I don't really seem to need them, and I expect prices to fall substantially over the next year or so. (I've learned from my upgrading experience that waiting a little bit longer might just have real benefits). By then, I expect to begin my doctoral dissertation, and will be in need of more memory, speed, and storage than the current configuration can offer. I'm a Word addict. Use it for everything. Papers, personal correspondence, notes. Everything. It's far from perfect. I would like to see a number of things changed (more

elaborate search routines, a better current page indicator, a completely reworked repaginate function, and more speed), but it's proven absolutely invaluable. I'm currently working with Word and MacDraw on a newsletter for my academic department. Seems a good stand-in for page layout applications.

Andrea Niedelman, Los Angeles, CA: I operate a typesetting business using my Macintosh Plus, a 512K Macintosh, and Laserwriter. I laser set resumés, forms, brochures, flyers, ads, business cards, letterheads, and so on, and also assist in their design.

Wilfred F. Long Jr., Gaithersburg, MD: I am a Medical Research Instrumentation Designer with the Navy Department. I employ a Lisa 2/5 in a variety of functions, but primarily as a professional "what-if" design aid.

Marion Delahan, Bartlesville, OK: In organizing a radio auction for charity, my husband put all the donated articles into an Excel database.

He moved them over to File to print out both the forms to be read by the auctioneer and the winning bidder certificates, one set for each article. He also printed out a minute by minute schedule for the time allotted to each item. Since the descriptions were printed out and clearly readable, it was fairly easy to keep very close to schedule. At one point in the cycle, the committee chairman asked if it would be possible to add another field to the form without serious trauma. With the chairman watching, my husband summoned up the form, clicked the mouse a couple of times and *voilà*, a new field was added to the form. The chairman was stunned. "Do you know how hard that is to do on an IBM?" Well, yes, we do. Thank you, Apple. Thank you, Microsoft. The entire auction went so smoothly and was so successful that the project won several state prizes. Much of the credit for the ease with which the auction was carried out went to my husband. This is not the first charity auction that his organization has had, but

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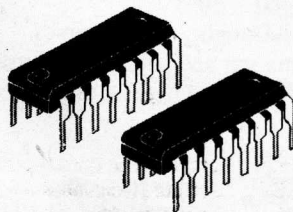
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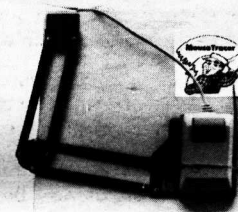
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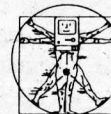
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everyone who participated agreed that the difference made by our Mac was significant. As a final touch, certificates of appreciation to significant participants were created with MacPaint and distributed. It was, of course, necessary for my husband to spend quite a bit of time in getting a workable system together, but everything is all set up for next year, and only the blanks need to be filled in.

Michael Comstock, Hayward, CA: I am part of a new Macintosh lab we have set up at Cal State Hayward to help interface student and faculty research with computers. We run everything from a 128K Mac to the Mac Plus.

We have four of our 512K Macs on a Corvus network with either an Imagewriter I or II hooked into each.

Software Received, But Not Yet Reviewed

This list is not compiled from press releases, but only from real products that have actually arrived at our office.

CLR ToolLib, MathStatLib, and SpeechLib, libraries that provide additional

statements usable by Microsoft BASIC programs. \$35 each, Clear Lake Research, 5615 Morningside #127, Houston, TX 77005, (800) 835-2246 x199.

MacStromony, an "observational astronomy program for casual sky observers as well as serious astronomers". Etlon Software, Box 649, Lafayette, CO 80026, (303) 665-3444.

MacGolf, a golf game for Macs with 512K or more of memory. \$59.95, Practical Computer Applications, 1305 Jefferson Hwy., Champlin, MN 55316, (612) 427-4789.

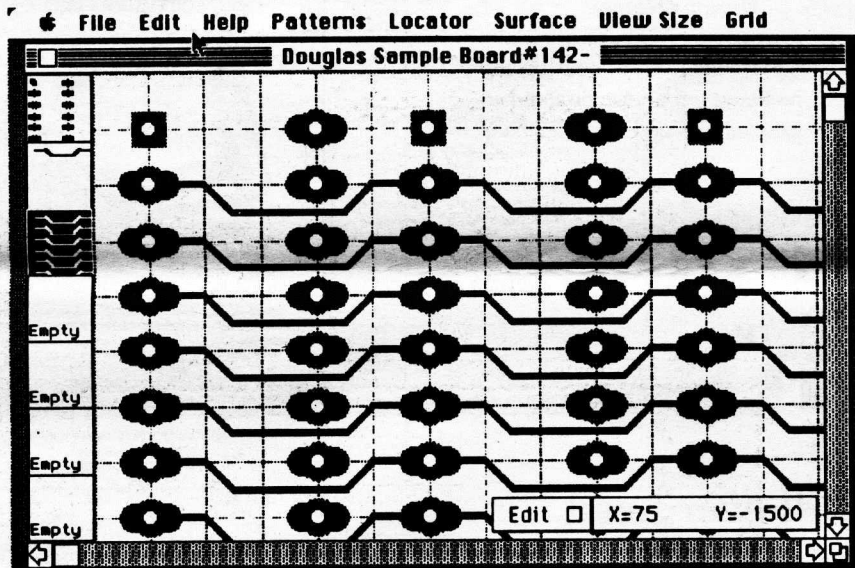
RealArt, "Midwest wildlife" clip art for the Macintosh. \$29.95, Electric Cottage Industries, Box 217, Spooner, WI 54801, (715) 635-3516.

DIQ Document Handlers, stencils for holding non-continuous labels, cards, or envelopes in printers. \$9.75 each, DIQ DOC, Box 626, Moss Beach, CA 94038, (415) 728-5462.

Rags to Riches, accounting software for the Macintosh. *Payables* module, *Receivables* module, and *Ledger* module (\$199.95 each, or \$499.50 for all three), *Professional Billing* module and *Inventory* module (\$399.95 each, or \$649.50 with *Ledger* and *Payables*), and *Multiplan Payroll Template* (\$39.95), from Chang Labs, 5300 Stevens Creek Blvd., San Jose, CA 95129, (800) 972-8800 or 831-8080.

BMUG Disk #40.1, public domain software for the Macintosh. \$6 per disk, Berkeley Macintosh Users Group, 1442A Walnut St. #62, Berkeley, CA 94709, (415) 849-9114.

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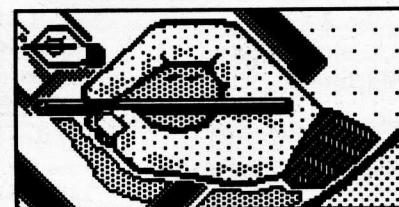
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Reinking For Fun And Profit

by Sue Brand

My company has a 128K Mac and an XL, each with an Imagewriter that's heavily used every day. We used to go through ribbons like crazy, just tossing them out when they dried up and ordering more. (We soon gave up on local supply stores because the quality of the ribbons was so poor, and started ordering direct from C. Itoh instead.)

I began to notice ads for ribbon reinking machines in various Mac publications, and so decided to start filling a large plastic bag with our used ribbon cartridges. Once our inventory of new ribbons ran out, and the bag held about twenty used ribbons, I made a deal where Bede Tech (located at 8327 Clinton Rd., Cleveland, OH 44144, phone 800-772-4536) would give me their ribbon reinker ("especially designed for the Imagewriter I and II") in exchange for writing a product review for *Signal*.

Bede Tech shipped me more than just the \$49 reinker I asked for. The reinker product includes a 4 oz. bottle of black ink and application roller, but Bede also sent two inked ribbons (\$12 in their ads), and their "Deluxe Rainbow Color Ink Kit": 2 oz. bottles of red, blue, yellow, and brown (!) ink, six application rollers, two unused 2 oz. ink bottles, and two uninked ribbons (a \$35 kit). Everything was packaged in Ziploc bags. All the bottles are plastic, and each comes with interchangeable leak-proof caps and drop applicator tips. A single typeset sheet lists directions on one side and half a page of hints on the other side.

Operation is simple. The reinker is a 7.5" x 4.5" x 2.5" plastic box on rubber feet. A motor inside slowly turns a small shaft sticking out the top of the box. A thumbwheel switch on the power cord starts and stops the motor. A ribbon cartridge is simply positioned on top of the reinker using a pair of guide holes, and the shaft turns the ribbon in its cartridge. The exposed portion of ribbon is looped around a felt pad roller that turns freely on another fixed shaft on the other end of the top of the reinker. Ink on the roller pad is thereby slowly transferred onto the ribbon. A small plastic tension wheel helps press the ribbon into the roller pad. The tension wheel is positioned against the roller pad by hand, and a wing nut is used to lock it in place.

My first attempts at reinking weren't very satisfactory, but after a little practice I now feel like an expert. My first problem was the initial application of ink to the dry

felt roller pads. The instructions state the rollers can be used after just five to ten minutes of initially saturating the rollers with a few drops of ink, while setting them aside for 24 hours allows "more even saturation". My recommendation is to *always* set aside a new roller for 24 hours after its first application of ink. Each roller comes with a vinyl cover. Put a few drops of ink on the roller, cover it, and put it in a Ziploc bag overnight. You'll get much better results on your first reinking attempt.

Once a roller pad has been "broken in" by saturating it with ink, it never needs more than half a dozen drops of ink for each ribbon being recycled. You

also never need more than one roller for each color of ink. Just place the roller pad on its shaft, put a few drops of ink in the reservoir at the top of the roller (I like to put the drops directly on the roller's felt), place a ribbon on the reinker and loop it around the roller pad, start the motor, and adjust the tension wheel to press the ribbon into the roller pad as it turns.

After fifteen minutes or so, the ribbon will have made a complete cycle over the roller pad. The instructions mention marking or timing various length ribbons to know when they're done, but I just wait until I notice both edges of the ribbon are marked with fresh ink splotches. (The tension wheel



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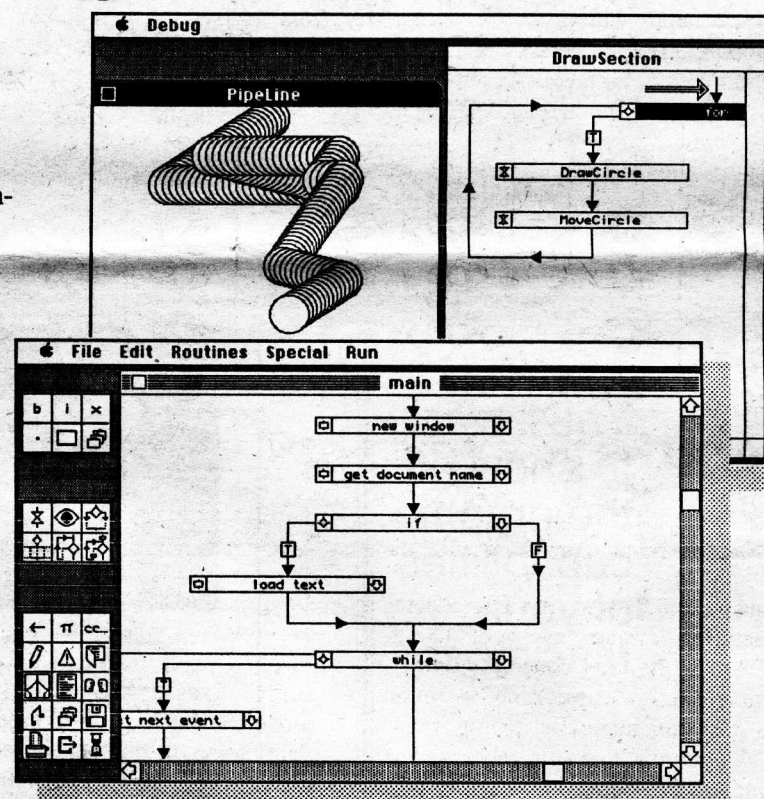
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presses only one edge of the ribbon into the felt roller pad. The Möbius strip ribbon has to make two passes to ink both edges.)

Ink comes off the roller onto the ribbon in random spots and streaks, which is normal. Just leave the newly inked ribbon in a Ziploc bag overnight to let osmosis evenly saturate the ink throughout the rest of the ribbon.

Finding the right amount of pressure for the tension wheel is the only tricky part that requires practice. Too little pressure, and the ribbon doesn't get enough ink. Too much pressure, and the ribbon is overinked, or is pressed off the roller pad. Fortunately, underinked ribbons can just be inked again, and overinked ribbons can just be left out to dry up some, but I would have preferred a tension wheel that was automatically adjusted by some kind of spring, instead of having to be adjusted by hand each time.

I used red and blue ink on the two uninked ribbons that came with the kit, to see if they might liven up some of the invoices and quotes we're always printing. While the black ribbons are working very well, I haven't been as happy with my new color ribbons. The red is just too pale and unpleasing. The blue is much nicer looking, but I also found that switching the color cartridges in and out of our printers tends to contaminate the ribbons with some

of the excess black gunk that accumulates around the print head. As a result, the red and blue are each slowly dissolving into a kind of purple. Keeping the printer free of excess ink deposits would solve the problem, but I'm just not inspired enough to bother.

In just a few hours, I finished reinking my first bag of saved up ribbons, and I had already saved the cost of the reinker. The life of a recycled ribbon seems indefinite, and

reinked black ribbons work very well, so I don't plan on buying any more ribbons. I'm even reinking ribbons for some of our customers who purchased Imagewriters from us. (One of our products is a non-Apple turnkey computer system for jails that happens to include Imagewriters.) Instead of ordering new ribbons through us, they return their old ribbons, and we reink them for \$1 each, which actually gives us a better profit margin.

Publications Received, But Not Yet Reviewed

This list is not compiled from press releases, but only from real products that have actually arrived at our office.

Excellent Exchange Catalog, a directory of Excel templates and programs. Heizer Software, 5120 Coral Ct., Concord, CA 94521, (415) 827-9013.

Listing, a catalog of public domain software available for downloading. The Connection BBS, 60 Bent Tree Dr. #1-D, Fairfield, OH 45014, (513) 874-3145.

MacTimes, a publication for Mac users. \$18/12 issues, MacTimes

Inc., Box 40, Franklin Square, NY 11010, (516) 775-8841.

Planning Big With MacProject, a book by James Halcomb. \$16.95, ISBN 0-07-881219-4, Osborne McGraw-Hill, 2600 10th St., Berkeley, CA 94710, (415) 548-2805.

The Macintosh Buyer's Guide, a quarterly directory of Macintosh products. \$14/year, Redgate Communications Corp., 3381 Ocean Dr., Vero Beach, FL 32963.

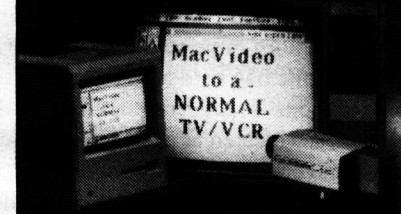
Icon Review Catalog, a mail order catalog for Macintosh products. Free, Icon Review, Box 2566, Monterey, CA 93942, (408) 625-0465.

Macworld, a monthly publication for Macintosh users. \$30/year, PC World Communications Inc., 501 2nd St. #600, San Francisco, CA 94107,

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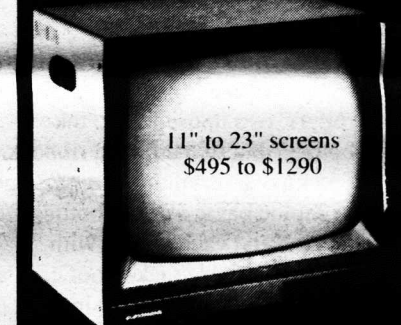
- Special Effects Generator uses Mac display for wipes/fades/dissolves, luminance keys, posterization. \$995
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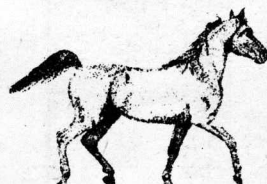
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The Aldus File, "technical news for users". Free to PageMaker Extended Technical Support Service subscribers and PageMaker dealers, Aldus Corp., 411 1st Ave. S. #200, Seattle, WA 98104, (206) 622-5500.

The MacHonor Bulletin, a newsletter from a Macintosh shareware company. CE Software, 801 73rd St., Des Moines, IA

50312, (515) 224-1995.

The Desktop Publisher, bimonthly news about PageMaker. Free to registered users, Aldus Corp., 411 1st Ave. S. #200, Seattle, WA 98104, (206) 622-5500.

New View... (free sample issue), a monthly newsletter for dBase Mac users. \$45/year, Lexington Research Inc., Box 246, Lexington, MA 02173, (617) 863-8275.

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Royal Blue (RB)
Brown (BR)

Imprint Size
(front side)
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5 1/2 X 3 1/2 Breast Pocket (P)

How Many

BG

XL

RB

Sample

L

3

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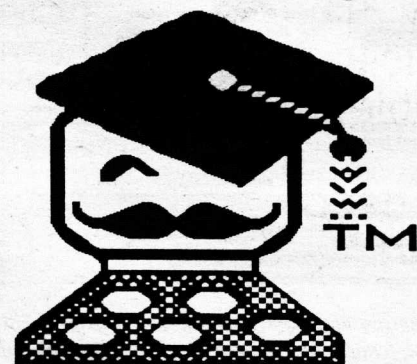
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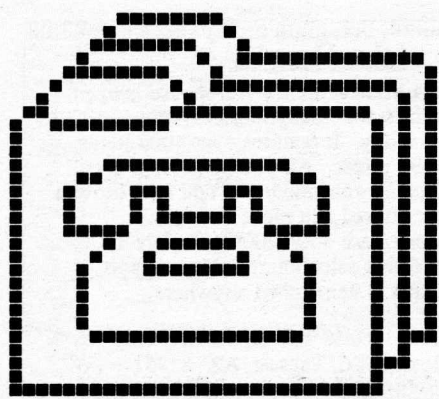
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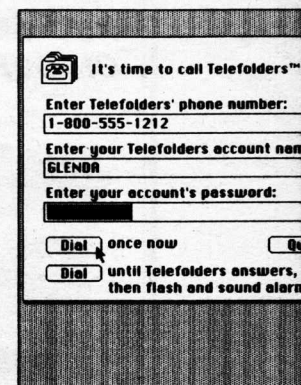
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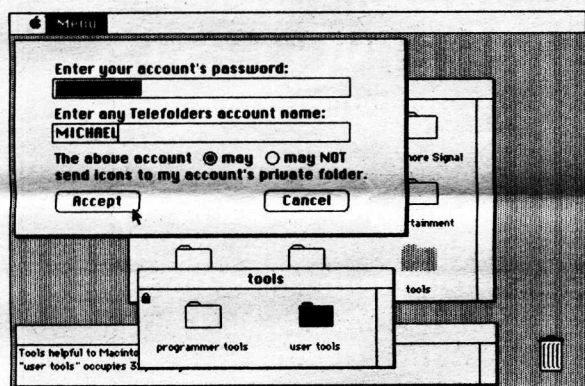
Semaphore's Telefolders

"The electronic information service"

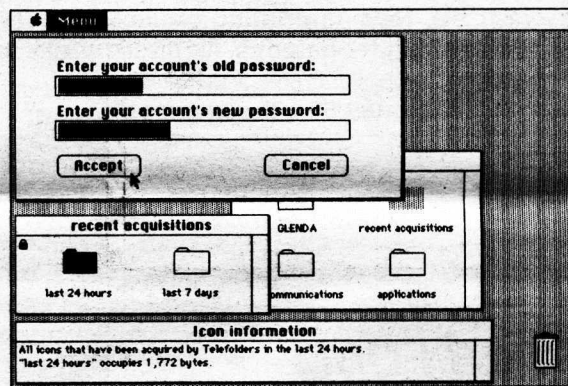
Announcing Semaphore's Telefolders, the electronic information service you already know how to use. Telefolders lets your Macintosh™ call Semaphore's host computer and access an exciting public data base of Mac software and private electronic mail. But unlike other text-based services, Telefolders uses only familiar windows and icons. There are no commands to type, no listings to wade through. Just double-click your mouse to enter, explore, and use the world of Telefolders...



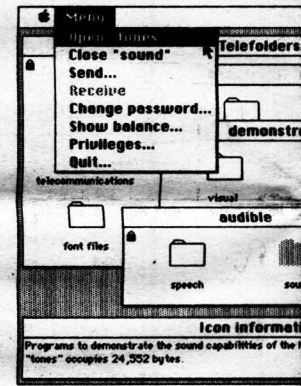
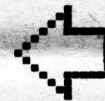
Insert the Telefolders disk, click the Telefolders icon in the dialing window shown on the right (it's masked for privacy), Mac automatically dials the Semaphore's host computer.



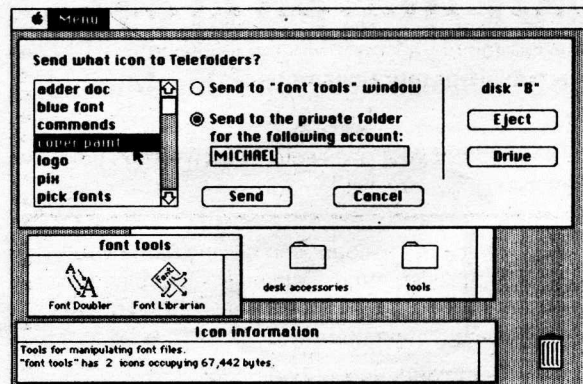
The "Privileges" selection in the pull-down menu lets you declare what other accounts may or may not send icons to your private folder. Of course, only you can actually open your private folder to access what's inside.



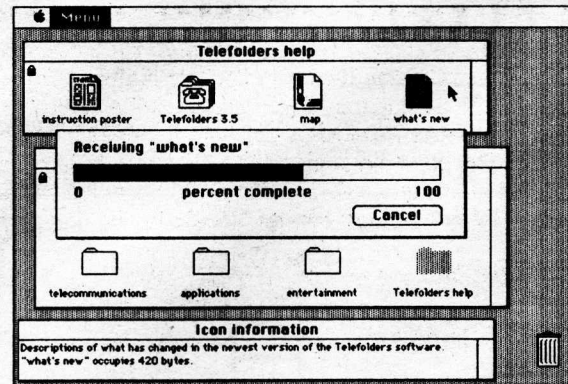
The pull-down menu lets you "Change password" for your account at any time.



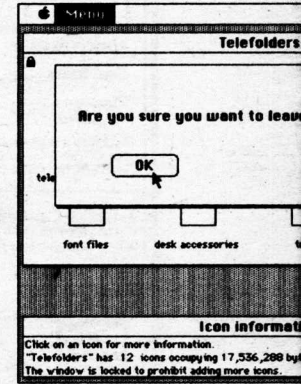
Double-click on a folder or a file in the pull-down menu, and the folder or file is taken you deeper into the world of Telefolders.



At any time, you can use the pull-down menu to "Send" any icon from your Macintosh to any unlocked public Telefolders window, or to any account's private folder that has given you permission to do so.



To copy any program, data, or document from Telefolders to your Macintosh, just click on its icon and select "Receive" from the pull-down menu.



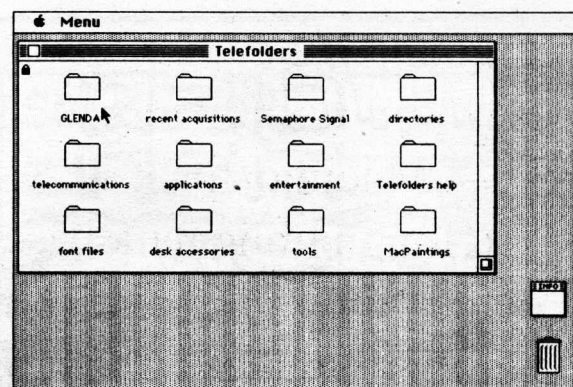
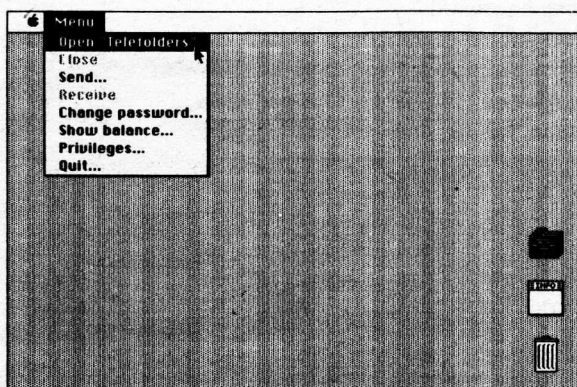
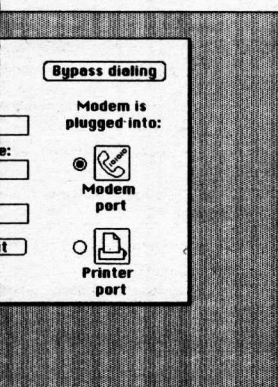
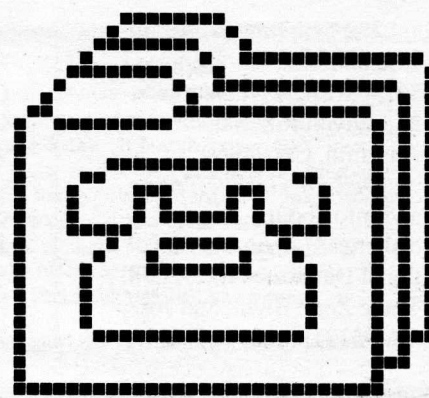
To end your Telefolders session, click on the pull-down menu. Semaphore's host computer will automatically disconnect you.

Telefolders operates at 1200 baud. Current Telefolders rates are 15¢ per minute anytime via our toll number, 54¢ per minute for prime time calls via our toll-free number from outside California, 74¢ per minute for prime time calls via our toll-free number from inside California, and 30¢ per minute all other times via all Telefolders toll-free numbers. Prime time is 9AM to 9PM Pacific time Monday through Friday for calls originating in California and 8AM to 5PM Pacific time Monday through Friday for other calls. Disk storage charges are 25¢ per 500 characters or fraction thereof for private files, totaled each midnight. Connect time and disk space is as measured by Telefolders. There are no registration charges, no monthly charges, no minimum charges, and no additional surcharges. Completed uploads to public folders are free except during prime time toll-free calls. Private files belonging to expired accounts are subject to erasure. All accounts are prepaid. If applicable, taxes are additional. Rates and services are subject to change without notice. Services are subject to availability. Telefolders software for the Macintosh is not copy protected, but is licensed for use only with Semaphore's host computer. Icons and options vary with Telefolders releases and may differ from the screens shown here. Some modems may not support autodialing. Semaphore's Telefolders is a trademark of Semaphore Corporation. Macintosh is a trademark licensed to Apple Computer Inc. Copyright © 1986 by Semaphore Corporation.

Telefolders

TM

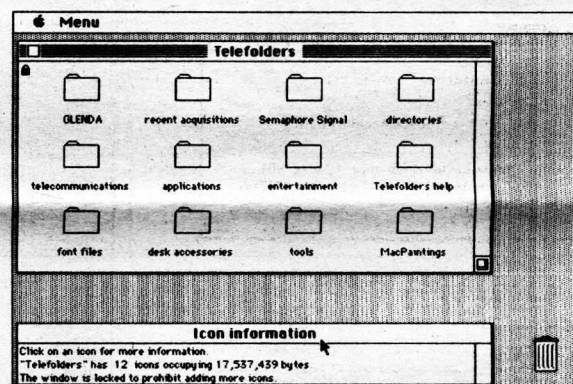
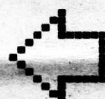
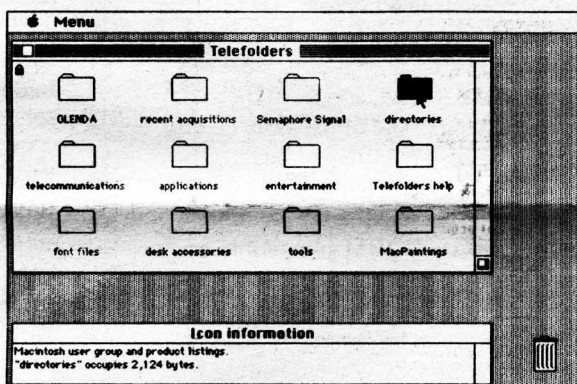
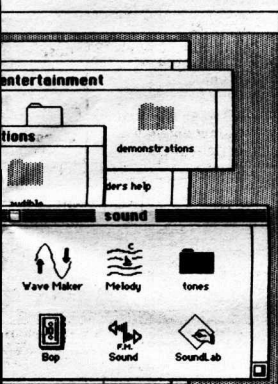
...once you already know how to use."



...into your Mac, double-click the Finder, and you'll get above. Type your password click on "Dial", and your phone and connects you to host computer.

A Telefolders session begins with three desktop icons. Double-click the Telefolders icon or select "Open" from the pull-down menu...

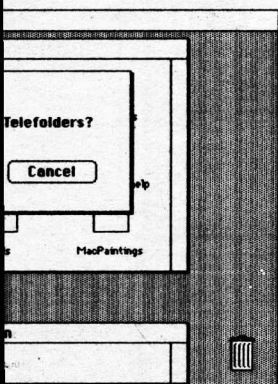
...and the desktop icon opens to a window showing the initial folders in Telefolder's public data base, along with one special private folder with your account name. Your private folder contains any personal icons you decide to save there or that other accounts send to you with your permission.



...use "Open" from the pull-down menu. The Telefolders data base.

Click on any icon, and the Icon information window automatically tells you all about it. Browsing couldn't be more simple.

Double-click on the desktop's Info icon to open the Icon information window. When open, the Icon information window is always automatically updated to give you details about the currently selected window or icon.



...ion, just select "Quit" from Semaphore's host computer will log you off.

[] YES, send me a Telefolders starter kit! Enclosed is my check for \$49.95 (+30¢ tax in CA, 32¢ in Santa Cruz Co.) payable to Semaphore Corporation. I understand I'll receive a disk containing Telefolders software for the Macintosh, an instruction poster, and an account good for \$45 of access usable at any time. (\$45 is equal to 5 hours toll-call access any time, or 2.5 hours toll-free access during non-prime-time.)

Signature (required!) _____ Date _____

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[] Protect my Telefolders account with the following password (must be six or more characters): _____

IMPORTANT: Remember your password! You won't be able to use your Telefolders account without it.

The name of your Telefolders account can be any name you choose. With your permission, other Telefolders users can contact you by your account name. If necessary, Semaphore Corp. will choose an account name for you.

[] Please set my Telefolders account name to...

1st CHOICE _____

2nd CHOICE _____

3rd CHOICE _____

[] Withhold my name and account from the public directory of all Telefolders accounts.

[] Allow confidential telephone support for my Telefolders account. (This gives Semaphore permission to reveal over the phone information about your account, such as a forgotten password or your account's balance, to individuals calling us, identifying themselves as you, and telling us the following.)

Birthplace _____ Mother's maiden name _____

The LisaTalk Report, for Lisa and Mac XL users. \$32/year, The NetWorkers, 21 Canyon Rd., San Anselmo, CA 94960.

Diskette Gazette, "news and info about 3.5 inch diskettes". Free, International Datawares Inc., 2278 Trade Zone Blvd., San Jose, CA 95131, (408) 262-6660.

Educomp's Macintosh Public Domain Software Catalog. \$1, Educomp, 2429 Oxford St., Cardiff, CA 92007, (619) 942-3838.

MacGraphics, a clip art catalog and demo disk. \$19.95, GoldMind Publishing, Box 70295, Riverside, CA 92513, (714) 785-8685.

This Month's Mailbag

Why Want Compatibility?

I once sat in a meeting where software acquisition was the topic. The organization had both Macs and IBMish PC clones, and one of the people in attendance asked for a particular file transfer package "because it has the same look and feel on both machines". "That's terrible!" I said. "You have the Mac going backwards".

It got me to thinking. What is it that makes people want compatibility between the Mac and the IBM? This particular person, I think, does not really want to use either machine for productivity; he just wants to be "knowledgeable" in both. This is most easily achieved if his knowledge is restricted to those things that are the same in both. I say let him have his wish, so long as he doesn't say anything to anybody else.

Apple announced that MS-DOS will be able to run on the next generation of Macs. According to *InfoWorld*, John Sculley seems to think that if Macs can run MS-DOS, then corporate MIS managers will approve them for purchase in the company. That's not only baloney, I think it's misinformed. There are two reasons in a Fortune 500 company for not buying Macs. First, it's not IBM. Just because it runs MS-DOS doesn't make it IBM, and it will not sell in that market. Some of the more careful MIS managers are willing to buy Compaq and other "compatibles" that are faster or cheaper only on the condition that they are 100% IBM compatible, so that if for any reason their supplier goes belly-up, or the hardware falls down and goes boom, it can be painlessly replaced with the real McCoy without batting an eye. The second reason is not all that different: the buyers want to be able to buy from different suppliers and mix-n-match; they call it "second-sourcing" even though they have no intention of actually buying from the second source. There is no second source for Macintosh, and Apple intends to keep it that way. No sale. Sculley admits, and the MIS managers are not otherwise deceived on this point, that nobody in his right mind would use MS-DOS if he had a choice

between it and the Mac.

So how is Apple going to sell Macs to Fortune 500 companies? The same way Apple has always sold computers to Fortune 500 companies: if you make an outstanding product, the productivity people will take them in the back door. June's *MacUser* points out that engineering departments across the country are now insisting on Mac and refusing to use MS-DOS.

Getting back to the compatibility issue, I asked this person why he wanted full file transfer compatibility between Mac and PC. He couldn't answer. There is no answer. If it is straight ASCII text files you want to transfer, any terminal emulator (with Kermit or Xmodem if you are worried about errors) will transfer them just fine. Programs like that exist in abundance for both machines. What about binary files? Xmodem handles those too, but why bother? You can't use the files after they are transferred! You can't even transfer binary data between two different programs on the same computer, much less two programs on CPUs as different as the 8088 and the 68000. I could understand transferring old (text) documents from PC to Mac to get the superior text processing, or old spreadsheets in SYLK to the Mac to be able to use Excel; I cannot imagine any need to send documents the other way, unless it is to support old fuddies who cannot (or will not) upgrade to the Mac. In any case, squirting them through an RS-232 wire works just dandy.

I have heard rumors about the new Apple "Macintosh Programming Workshop" and what it looks like. They are replacing the Finder with a command line shell like Unix or MS-DOS. Judging from the discussions among developers on CompuServe, this seems to be what the more vocal developers are asking for. You have to credit Apple for listening. But it's a good thing they did not listen when the Mac was designed, for then we would not have the Mac. The developers are wrong. What we really need is a multi-window developing environment (or maybe at least Switcher compatibility), so that editing does not go away while you are compiling, and linking does not appear to be a separate step.

I guess the developers are somewhat



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like my friend: they want the same operating environment on all the machines they work on, so they don't have to learn a new environment when they are obliged to switch. And they will continue to be obliged to switch because the MIS managers buy only IBM not Apple, and the software publishers know that, and the publishers also know they can charge more money for IBM software that does less, and there will be more stupid buyers to snap it up.

That's OK. We don't have to be intimidated by the IBMers, and we don't have to use Apple's MPW. Somebody else (the developers, for example) can do all that, and we will (hopefully) enjoy only the Mac interface that we all know and love. Let's hear it for IBM compatibility: "Bleah!"

Tom Pittman, Manhattan, KS

Signal Should See Servant

You should do a review (or preview) about Andy Hertzfeld's Servant program, which allows the Macintosh to operate in a manner similar to the Lisa Office System desktop. That is, all applications execute within a window, and several applications can be resident in their respective windows on the desktop at the same time. I believe Servant will

become the standard operating environment of the Macintosh, since it enables application multi-tasking.

David T. Craig, Wichita, KS

Now that Telefolders is off and running, we're especially interested in new alternatives to the Finder. We've noticed Servant making quite a splash the last few months, especially in the club newsletters, which have been our only source of Servant news so far. We haven't gotten a copy of it for ourselves yet. -Editors

Mac Plus Upgrade Woes

In May I upgraded to a Mac Plus and, unfortunately, have had a series of setbacks.

I was one of those early Mac buyers in March of 1984. Yes, I paid \$2500 for a 128K Mac! I quickly learned what many 128K Mac owners did: "musical disks", the fine art of disk swapping. Before 1984 was over I bought both the 512K Apple motherboard and a 400K external drive. That certainly made life easier.

1986, and along came the Mac Plus upgrade. Once again I drooled over the improvements: 1024K of RAM, 128K ROM, the SCSI port. Should I buy an expensive Apple upgrade board again? (First time buyers could

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☐ XL (Lisa and MacWorks)
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☐ AppleTalk network
☐ Laserwriter(+) ☐ Hard Disk 20
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Signal #27: Checking On A Few Spelling Checkers * 29 Club Notices And Newsletters * 6 Subscriber Interests And Activities * 1 Product Received, But Not Yet Reviewed * The Benefits Of New Feet, Novocaine Ramblings.

Signal #26: The Past, Present, And Future Of The Macintosh Desktop * 20 Club Notices And Newsletters * 5 Subscriber Interests And Activities * 15 Products Received, But Not Yet Reviewed * This Month's Mailbag: Fatten Your Mac For \$50?, Word, 1stBase, Speller..., OverView Overview, Mainframe Tools Wanted, Mincing Words With Word, MacWorks Likes DMPs!, Votes For And Against The NetWorkers, A Happy Upgrade, Genealogy Software Wanted.

Signal #25: Professional Composer Prints Professionally * 22 Subscriber Interests And Activities * A Free-Form Super Note Pad * 42 Products Received, But Not Yet Reviewed * MacBooster vs. TurboCharger * 31 Club Notices And Newsletters * Quicksetting A Messy Desk * This Month's Mailbag: Root Canal Relapse, ClickArt Effects Isn't Unstable... Or Is It?, MacPublisher Ups And Downs, Undocumented Tools, Lisa To Mac Migration, Our RSVP Wasn't Enough, IGES To Macintosh Migration, It's Lonely In Oregon, More Words On Word, Find Me A Group.

Signal #24: Gaining Speed With TurboCharger * 8 Subscriber Interests And Activities * ClickArt Effects Useful But Unstable * 21 Club Notices And Newsletters * This Month's Mailbag: Adding To Word's Font List, Paying A Pre-Released Program Penalty, Moving From Lisa To Mac, MacPublisher vs. ReadySetGo, We're Such A Flighty Publication, Rolodex Help Needed, MusicWorks Help Given, How To Learn About Computers, Atari About To Axe Apple?, Improving Reviews And

Bypassing Protection, The Pricing Controversy Continues, New Imagewriter Driver Available, Some Favorites Not So Appealing After All, How To Rewind Files, LisaVision Address Revealed * Price Of A Disk Buys Foreign Fonts * 12 Products Received, But Not Yet Reviewed.

Signal #23: Mincing Words With Hayden:Speller * This Month's Mailbag: Copy II Mac, Dollars And Sense, MacLion, Word Can Do Banners, Pixel Switch Available, Zapping Is Sometimes Preferred, Shareware Blues, Font Editor Instructions Missing, MusicWorks Problems And Expensive Software * 4 Subscriber Interests And Activities * Odesta's Helix Arrives At Signal * 13 Products Received, But Not Yet Reviewed.

Signal #22: Do You Need Microsoft Word? * 17 Club Notices And Newsletters * 9 Subscriber Interests And Activities * A Mac Product For Simple Profit Tests * This Month's Mailbag: All I Want Is A Blank Staff, From A Future Publisher, Where Have You Been All This Time?, You Lose The Desktop, But..., Phone Book Publisher Identified, Long Live Lisa, Deleting the Desktop, So Many Programs, So Little Space, Macintosh Pascal Limitations, What's The Catch? * 3 Products Received, But Not Yet Reviewed.

Signal #21: Should You Move Up To ThinkTank 512? * 12 Products Received, But Not Yet Reviewed * Some New Desk Accessories Arrive * This Month's Mailbag: Where Is Signal Headed?, Encyclopedia Author Meets MacPaint Author, Signal Gets A Thumbs Down, Explaining Those Icon Surprises, Suggested: List Prices, Embrace? We Don't Even Shake Hands, Falling In Love With Mac, 7,012 Down, A Few Hundred Thousand To Go.

Signal #20: A Contribution To Bach's Tricentennial * Quickly Unloading Lisa Folders * 6 Subscriber Interests And

Activities * Copy II Mac Earns A Thumb's Up * Still Advertising On A Shoestring? * MS-BASIC Finally Arrives At Signal * This Month's Mailbag: I Can't Type My Own Name, More Untypeable Characters * A Version Of Klondike Solitaire Surprises Us.

Signal #19: Seven Odds And Ends For Lisa Users * 7 Club Notices And Newsletters * 7 Subscriber Interests And Activities * This Month's Mailbag: An Encyclopedia Of Encyclopedia Faults, Which Package Will Fly?, A Vote For Main Street Filer, Report From A MacWorks User, Looking For Lisa Products, An Omnis Omnibus, Tying Up A Few Loose Ends, Tecmar Font Moving Revisited, Where Is LisaPaint?, Another Brick In The Wall, Which Language Is Best?, More Habadex Blues * 13 Products Received, But Not Yet Reviewed.

Signal #18: An Encyclopedia Of Macintosh Faults * The Rest Of Our DataTower Findings * A Landlord's Tussle With Habadex * A You Advertising On A Shoestring? * Macintosh Pascal Arrives At Signal * This Month's Mailbag: Macintosh Needs Software, Have You Indexed Your Clip Art Lately? * 3 Products Received, But Not Yet Reviewed.

Signal #17: This Month's Mailbag: Mailing Labels And 1stBase And PFS And..., Testimonial From A Satisfied Customer, A Report On Aztec C, This Month's Mailbag: HELP!, Where Does A Mac Upgrade Shop Go?, Macintosh For A Macintosh, A State-Of-The-Art Report On Apple, Pneu-Mouse Phot-Making It? * Two Prototype Pokers Arrive * 8 Subscriber Interests And Activities * 10 Products Received, But Not Yet Reviewed.

Signal #16: Priam's DataTower Arrives For Tests * This Month's Mailbag: T/Maker Reviews Our Review, A Reader Abandons 3.0, Perhaps 7/7 Isn't A Whole, Is Anyone MacWorking?, What's New With Microsoft

Basic 1.01, Circle Constructors Wanted, Apple's Experts Notice Our Typography, This Time LisaWrite Fooled Us, Templates Wanted * More Notes On Tecmar's Mac Drive * Mouse Stampede Gets A Thumbs Up * 4 Subscriber Interests And Activities * 4 Products Received, But Not Yet Reviewed * 2 More User Groups Check In.

Signal #15: User Groups: Great Source of Software * Hardware Received: Tecmar's Mac Drive * ClickArt Fails To Impress Us * Mac-Jack Earns A Thumbs Up * 8 Subscriber Interests And Activities * The Secret Lisa Service Mode * This Month's Mailbag: Toolkit Selling At Cost, One Billion Served?, Two Mac Deficiencies, A Foreign Exchange, An Author Needs Help, Some Signal #14 Feedback * Habadex Back Again.

Signal #14: Exploring Lisa's New Office System * Stanford Making Mac Development Tools * The Latest On Three Mac User Groups * 6 Items From This Month's Mailbag.

Signal #13: Exploring The Macintosh Upgrade * To Shift Or Not To Shift: It's An Option * Where To Go To See More * How To Display Priam Whamos * Software Received: Habadex * MacWrite Can Send ASCII Files * Our Current Mac And Lisa Wish List * Incremental Backups Miss Workshop Files * Clear Your Desktop In Three Clicks * 8 Items From This Month's Mailbag.

Signal #12: User Groups Sprout * Toolkitters Organizing * Publish Your Macintosh Art * 2 Items From This Month's Mailbag.

Signal #11: Mac Success Freezes Lisa * Free Another 17K Of Disk * Can You Type A Robot? * Lisa Upgrade Ups And Downs * Art Dept. Correction * 5 Items From This Month's Mailbag.

Signal #10: Does Your DMP Need Speed? * Signal's Mac Arrives * Received: Art Department * 4 Items From This Month's Mailbag.

Signal #9: Our Coverage Expands * Rotation By Reflection * Other Mac Publications * Workshop Editor Trick * LisaCalc Margin Waste * Mac vs. Lisa Design Details * Cleaning Up Endpoints * More Kudos for Lisa * How to Lose Preferences * Software Received.

Signal #8: Mail From Six Of Our Readers.

Signal #7: What Will 1984 Bring? * Free Report On LisaProject * How To Lose A Document * Self-Service Gotcha * Our Christmas Wish List.

Signal #6: The Avoided Environment * 1.4 Release Fixes LisaCalc * Why Didn't We Think Of That? * A Big Retail Discount * More Reader Responses * Remember The Option Key.

Signal #5: LisaWrite Wish List Part 2 * AppleLisa Wants You * LisaCalc Print Tricks * Rubber Band Freezes DMP * What's That Unused Connector?

Signal #4: LisaWrite Wish List Part 1 * Lisa Prices Plummet.

Signal #3: Report From The Castle * Credit Where Credit Is Due * Quote Of The Month * Fooling LisaWrite * Read Protects & Backspaces * Peanuts, Popcorn.

Signal #2: Shading A Rounded Region * Quote Of The Month * Lisa Day: August 11th * Where To Plug That Printer * Are Passwords Possible? * A Programmer Cries Out * Establishing A Backup Library.

Signal #1: Welcome To Signal! * Why 7 x 9? * Where To Put That Profile * Pointers To Pascal * A Lisa Bug (Or Feature?) * The Topology Of Lisa Disks.

Issues #1 through #12 are 7x9 inches. Issues #15 through #24 are 8.5x11 inches. Macintosh coverage began with issue #9. Issues #3 to #5, #7, #9 to #12 are not typeset. Issues vary from 4 to 16 pages.

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already purchase a Mac Plus for what I spent on a 128K Mac!)

Well, I did buy the Mac Plus upgrade. And numerous small problems arrived.

When I got home and installed all my usual peripherals, including the reset switch, I immediately had a problem. The 800K internal disk drive had two heads, with a protective plastic fake disk in the drive for transportation. It was supposed to come out on power up. It did not. No amount of coaxing would release it. Not even the handy dandy paper clip trick worked. Another trip to the dealer. The dealer had to force it out too. It turns out the upgrade replaced the back of the case (no Mac Plus logo for the front, though)

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but the new side ventilation grills were too tight and the programmer's switch stuck in the depressed position. The stuck switch would not allow a normal boot to release my plastic transport disk.

Right away, software incompatibility reared its ugly head. As documented on various bulletin boards, there are many pieces of existing Mac software that have problems with the Mac Plus. I knew in advance of some of the problems, but the bugs in Apple's own software surprised me. Yes, that's right. System 3.0, 3.1, and 3.1.1, Finder 5.1 and 5.2, Imagewriter 2.0, 2.1 and 2.2, and the Laserwriter files all had annoying bugs.

My immediate problem was setting up copy protected software to run on the Mac Plus. A bummer! Some programs simply refused to cooperate. 800K disks also created problems. None of my utility software (MacZap, Copy II Mac, MacTools, Fedit, etc.) worked with 800K disks.

While the new 800K internal drive could read both MFS and HFS double or single sided disks, my external 400K drive would read only 400K disks. When putting a double sided disk into the 400K external drive, the Mac would supply the misleading "Cannot read this disk. Do you want to initialize it?" dialog. I lost a couple disks that way until I realized the disks did indeed have data on them. Unable to resist the temptation of 800K

storage, I had immediately set up my most used disks as 800K, only to discover I had to play musical disks again, and swap them in and out of my one and only 800K internal drive. Shades of the 128K Mac again. Nuts! So I had to buy an additional double sided external drive. Who wants to buy a used single sided drive?

If you want to avoid numerous annoying software problems, my recommendation is to use System 3.2 and Finder 5.3, or later versions. Otherwise software will either not run at all, or crash or get lost while trying to find some file on disk. Copy protected software will be the most likely culprit, since they often do something strange with disks, such as depending on certain information at specific locations on a single side of a 400K disk. Public domain software may also be risky. Try programs first with unimportant data. Be especially careful with any disk editing or resource editing software. A lot of PD stuff is great, but might not have been designed for the Mac Plus, HFS, nor debugged as thoroughly as commercial software might be. Also, some copy protected games use a modified System file, and any attempt to use a newer System means trashing the game disk. If your application depends on support files, try putting them either in the System folder, or the application and its associated files together in a single folder.

I had super problems with

Mac C version 4.0, which is not HFS compatible. They've since corrected it with 4.5 and have just released 5.0.

Smartcom II 2.1b got lost in the file system. I just upgraded to 2.2b.

Gato 1.3 ran, but always bombed unpredictably. Gato 1.42 works, and is not copy protected!

Quick & Dirty Utilities 1.5 was undependable under HFS. 1.6 seems to work well.

Diskinfo 1.43 is much improved over several prior versions in recent months, and can find a file for you under HFS.

The Mock series all work well in their 4.3 version. Prior versions have various problems.

Several public domain desk accessories and applications are in serious trouble. Use accessories at your own risk. Daleks, an old PD game that I enjoyed, won't boot at all on my Plus.

The most risky software are (old) public domain programs and copy protected commercial software.

It is possible to have and make both deliberately and accidentally: an HFS 400K single sided disk (hold down Option while formatting the disk as single sided on a Plus); an MFS 400K single sided disk, an HFS 800K double sided disk, and an MFS 800K double sided disk. The last one's weird: first boot with an HFS System 3.2 and Finder 5.3, format a disk as

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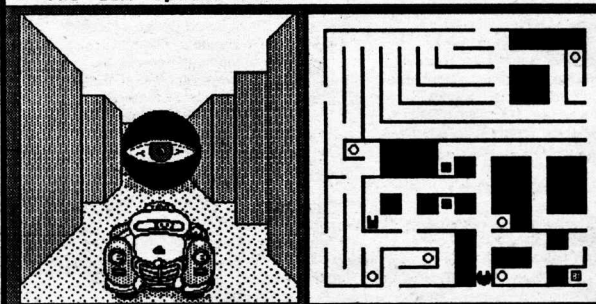
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800K double sided and shut down the Mac. Boot again, but this time use an old disk (such as with Finder 4.1). Insert your new 800K disk, select it, and erase it. The result is an 800K MFS volume, all done on a Plus with 800K drives.

I bought a Mirror Technologies 800K external drive by mail order. The first week, I thoroughly trashed three disks. The "This disk is locked" dialog appeared many times, even when the disk was not physically locked. The "This is

not a Mac disk..." dialog also appeared very often. Two calls to Mirror Technologies and they suggested I send it in and they would return another drive. They said the problem had arisen only on upgraded Macs, not new Mac Pluses. (Just what is different, Apple? I bought your Mac Plus motherboard at premium price expecting to avoid compatibility problems.)

Four weeks went by and I received the replacement drive from

Mirror Technologies. It does seem to work, and reliably too. This newer drive is physically smaller.

The Mac Plus has circular DIN-8 plugs for the modem and printer ports, but the upgrade came with only one adapter cable for mating DB9 connectors. I ended up playing "musical cables" to use my printer and modem. New adapter cables were scarce. I finally got another in late June.

The first attempt to print with the Mac Plus started fine, finished

about two thirds of a page, then garbaged the rest. The only way out of that one was the new 2.2 Imagewriter driver I got off a bulletin board. I downloaded it with the newer versions of the System and Finder. (My local dealer was no help.)

All this means my wonderful Mac Plus is a nice piece of hardware and software, but bugs exist, and not all my old Mac software runs dependably with it. It's disappointing after my original

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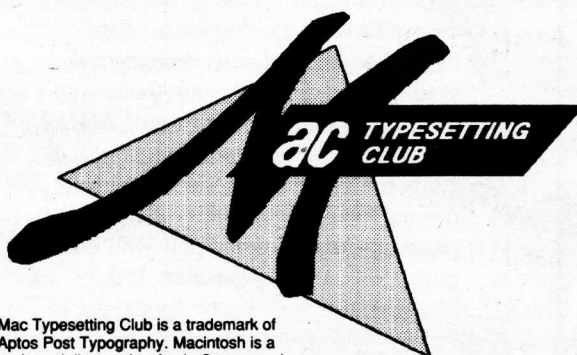
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128K Mac, a machine with which I did everything I could think of when I first received it, and it did *not* lose data. All told, I have completely lost four disks of data in the past five weeks.

Don't get me wrong. I do love my Mac Plus. It's faster, the 800K drives hold more and are faster, and a megabyte of

RAM is great for RAM disks. The dust will settle when everyone upgrades their software, and the peripheral people debug their interfaces. Michael Johnson, Trenton, OH

Smaller Signals?

Have you ever considered going back to 8-1/2 x 11, rather than the present

unwieldy size?

Simon Streiffer, Metairie, LA

We liked it too, but it's too expensive. -Editors

Suggested Upgrade Strategy For Apple

After reading the rather long letter from Don Kennedy in *Signal* #27, I might as well add my two cents. The best hope for Apple to stay alive is *standardization of the Mac product line!*

To do that, they should continue a compatible, upward migration path of more powerful Mac Plus-type products, all of which had better run current software a lot easier than the 512K to Plus nightmare. I don't think Apple can stand too many more upgrade blunders like the Plus has produced. The OS, Finder, and other system software have just got to stabilize, become bug-free, and provide a transportable path for future, more powerful Mac machines. If future Mac machines continue to offer more memory, power, and features, with compatibility with the current Mac, then Apple will succeed.

I enjoyed the article on spelling checkers. It was well done, and gave a good comparison of the strengths and weaknesses of each product. And best of all, it clearly indicated the right product for my needs. I'm going out and buying Spellswell! How about a similarly clear review of hard SCSI disk drives?

Incidentally, your inclusion of *Macworld* as a magazine you received but have not yet reviewed was strange. Are you saying you actually intend to review it, or would you have us believe it's a new product you hadn't seen before?

David E. Smith, Anaheim, CA

Although we haven't been able to get Macworld to return the favor, we believe that if someone is going to go to the trouble of sending us a product for free, even a mere periodical, we can at least list it. -Editors

Scientist Wants Spellers, Symbol Manipulators

I enjoyed the article on spelling checkers in *Signal* #27. I am a poor speller and am interested in spelling checkers since I write quite a bit in my job as a physicist. The article discussed MacLightning (which I'm using as I write this) and Spellswell, which I've also used. I've given up on Spellswell because of all those crazy checks, such as do you mean "to" for "two" or "too"? Or my favorite, do you mean "thee" instead of "the"? I can't imagine how your authors didn't run into those with the *Ulysses* example they used. Since I use those common words frequently, the alerts for the checks occur all the time, driving me nuts, so I shut off homonym checking, which turns Spellswell into a fairly poor spelling checker. It does have the nice feature of only having to correct a misspelling once. MacSpell+ could use that.

MacLightning is a nice checker, as I

don't lose my train of thought when I make an error, so I can properly make a correction on the spot. It has one shortcoming, however. While it does find words which are not in the dictionary, it has zero capability to guess what the correct spelling might be. Since I'm a bad speller, I consider that power a vital feature of a spelling checker. That's why I like MacSpell+. It can generally tell me the correct spelling of words I've messed up.

Thus I think spelling checkers need to be judged on two capabilities: not only how well they find misspellings, but also how good they are at guessing the correct spelling intended. No spelling checker I've used seems to meet what I'm looking for in both of those categories.

As a scientist, I'm also interested in a word processor capability to enter and manipulate equations and symbols for scientific articles. Recently I came across a program called the Macintosh Equation Processor from Software for Recognition Technologies in Rochester, New York. It's a desk accessory that allows you to easily generate very complex mathematical expressions and paste them into a Macwrite or Word document. You cannot easily edit the equations directly, but with Switcher and MacDraw you can have a full edit capability. Furthermore, with a laser printer, it produces beautiful text.

I also have an interest in a family of artificial intelligence programs variously called algebraic or symbolic manipulators. These programs do for calculus, trigonometry and algebra what word processing did for writing. I find them very useful. Unfortunately, most of the existing programs of this type, such as MACSYMA, exist only on large mainframe computer systems. MuMath is a smaller version that runs on the IBM PC, but is very heavily constrained by memory. Seems to me, with the large memory of the Mac Plus (potentially 4 megabytes), the Mac is an ideal candidate for such software. If any is out there, please let me know. I have Tk Solver and Power Math, but they are toys compared to MuMath or MACSYMA.

I've upgraded my fat Mac to a Mac Plus with a HyperDrive, which is the best thing I've ever done with a personal computer. The speed increase over floppies is enormous, the extra memory is wonderful, and the hard disk (I've filed away my floppies) is superb.

James T. Miller Jr., Laurel, MD

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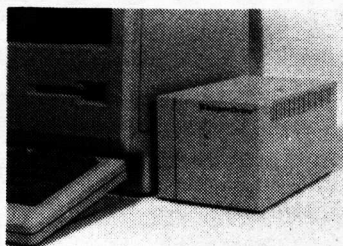
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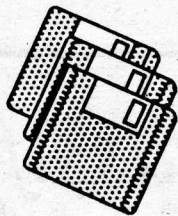
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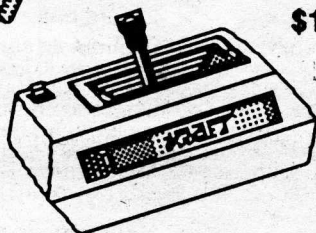
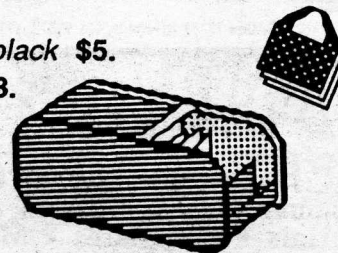
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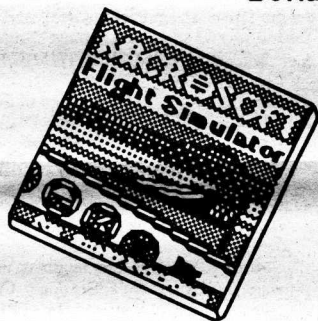
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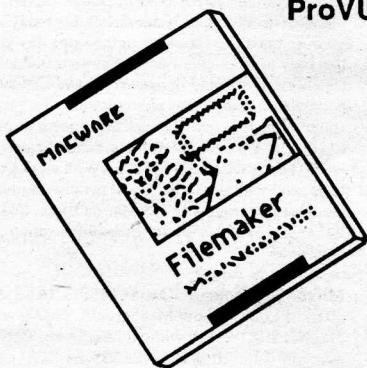
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have become very comfortable using it, primarily for word processing but also more recently for spreadsheets. I have followed the recent improvements in the Mac with great interest. What are your recommendations regarding updating my basic, old-fashioned, 128K Mac? How difficult would it be to get used to the new features? I am not, by any stretch of the imagination, a computer whiz. I just plod along. How do I transfer the 150 disks I already have into the new system? I can't afford a laser printer now, but I certainly will be able to in

the near future. Is it possible to upgrade to 512K, and then upgrade from there to the new ROMs and 800K disk drive, the new logic board, and the new keyboard? How do I keep the machine flexible enough to allow future upgrades, such as when I get a hard disk drive? How can a SCSI port be added on? Is there a new textbook similar to Cary Lu's excellent and eminently readable introduction to the Macintosh that explains all the changes that have been made?

Where can I get these questions

The FREE Unclassifieds

IT'S HERE: Professional Data Management Inc. has established a BBS in Tucson entitled the Professional Data Management Warehouse. This BBS offers software and computer equipment at unheard-of discounts. Most are substantially lower than mail order houses (for example, 20MB HyperDrives at only \$1,252.80, 2400 baud Hayes compatible modems at only \$305.20). Items may be ordered electronically using Visa, Mastercard, and checks. Over one million dollars worth of items for computers such as Macintosh, Apple II series, IBM and compatibles, and others are available through this BBS. The telephone number is (602) 881-0473. Operating 24 hours at 300-1200-2400 (8-N-1).

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answered? I am about to move, and I just don't have the time (literally) to join a user's group or shop at a local outlet. My day typically runs from 8 to 6 and I do not get any mornings or afternoons off. I don't have the money to take chances on something that may not work properly.

Alan K. Silverman, Ann Arbor, MI

Don't worry, most user groups don't meet mornings or afternoons. Take a night off and visit one and you'll find lots of answers, though we think first you'll have to ask yourself why you even need an upgrade. (See our response to the next letter for our philosophy on upgrades.) -Editors

Wanted: Guide To The Perfect Upgrade

An article I would like to see, but only if well researched and considered, would present a carefully designed matrix showing the best upgrade choice for Mac owners of all the possible combinations of hardware and software. The toughest choices in computing "for the rest of us" lie in getting our money's worth. Certainly, upgrade choices are subjective, but such an article would be a godsend for many of us who don't even know what a MUG is.

As an example of an upgrade dilemma, consider choosing between ram disks and second drives. I carry my Mac back and forth to an uncomfortable degree, and a second drive has little attraction for the extra bother, even though I recognize it could reduce my disk count by a startling percentage. With the new 800K units available, there is the choice of cheap secondhand 400K external disk drives coming on the market. I have not even begun to count up the possible trade-offs, but I do not think they include rushing out blindly for the latest Apple offering. Consider: just a year ago I gave \$1,063.69 for the Apple 512K upgrade, and a copy of MacProject which showed up 5.5 months later and for which I have never found a use. Less than three weeks later, Apple cut the price to \$795. Three months ago an associate installed his RAM chips for \$91 out-of-pocket. Should I really run out and buy the one megabyte upgrade, or should I wait twelve months, or should I sell the whole kaboodle today and buy an optimized and cheaper New Mac at Christmas, after Apple has finally

decided what they are trying to sell and to whom?

You fellers much closer to the industry than I am should think this through and publish a carefully considered evaluation of choices. Apple's pricing policies have always been worked out on voodoo abaci, and they seem to be continuing that miserable practice. They force my hands deeper into my pockets. I intend to just watch the scene, even when they have something I consider a tremendous bargain. Is this the response they really want from interested Mac owners?

Ned Raub, Waterford, CT

We've received a lot of letters asking about upgrades. Interestingly, most of the writers tell us about products and prices, but not why they think they need an upgrade. It's suspicious how users get by and have enough disk space and memory and speed, right up until the day new upgrades are announced. Then panic sets in, and everyone wants to know what the "right" choice is. That makes us want to ask: do you need to make a choice? Do you really need more computer, or are Apple's marketing efforts just working you over? What is it your computer suddenly isn't doing satisfactorily anymore?

To us, upgrades (and new products) seem to depend on a curve plotted on two axes. One axis is cost, the other is desire. The longer we wait to buy an upgrade, the more money we always save, but the more we want that upgrade. Sometimes we wait long enough, and cost becomes unimportant. Or we can't stand it anymore and buy it. Or we even discover we really were overcome with marketing hype, and didn't need or want the thing after all. Where everyone else falls on the curve is such a personal matter that it's hard to make general recommendations that will work for significant numbers of people. -Editors

Aptos Etymology

How'd your town get its strange name?

Norman Gold, Huntington Stn., NY

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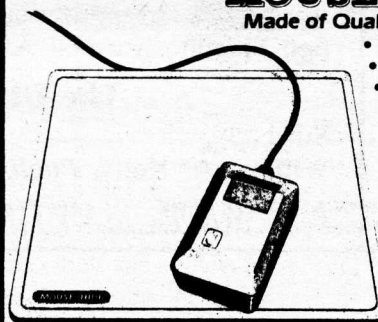
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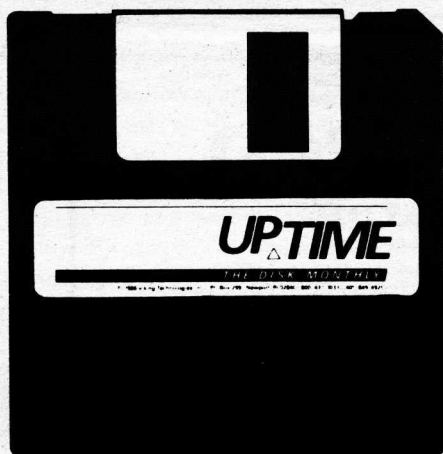
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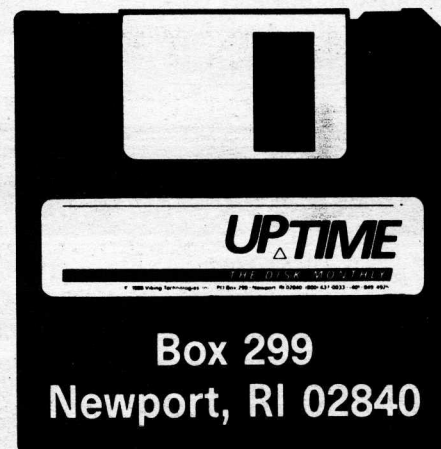
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